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Rent paid for the Kerala soap institute building.

523 Q.—Mr. A. D. M. Bavotti Sahib: Will the hon. the Minister for Development be pleased to state—

(1) how long the Kerala soap factory building and its premises have been in possession of the Government;

(2) what is their present rent per mensem;

(3) how long the Government have been paying rent at that rate; and

(4) what was the rate at which they were originally taken?

A.—(1) The present premises have been in the possession of Government since 1916.

(2) Rupees 250 per mensem.

(3) From 1st November 1920.

(4) Rupees 75 per mensem.

Irrecoverable debts on account of the Kerala soap institute.

524 Q.—Mr. A. D. M. Bavotti Sahib: Will the hon. the Minister for Development be pleased to state—

(1) what was the total amount written off on account of the Kerala soap institute as irrecoverable debts during the year 1921–22; and

(2) who was responsible for them?

A.—(1) The amount actually written off the accounts during the year 1921–22 was Rs. 22-13-4. The Government also sanctioned during the year the writing-off of two other large items of loss which have yet to be formally brought to account, the details of which will be found in paragraph 66 of the Administration Report for 1921–22, which has been placed on the Editors' Table.

(2) As regards the first item, the Government have no information. As regards the two large items, the Government have held the Madras Traveller and the Superintendent of the Institute responsible in some degree for the loss.

Admission for training in the Kerala soap factory.

525 Q.—Mr. A. D. M. Bavotti Sahib: Will the hon. the Minister for Development be pleased to state how many applications for admission to the Kerala soap factory for training were received during 1920–21 and 1921–22 and how many were admitted?

A.—In 1920–21, twenty-one applications were received and five admitted. In 1921–22, twenty-six applications were received and eight admitted.

Stock of soda ash in the Kerala soap factory.

526 Q.—Mr. A. D. M. Bavotti Sahib: Will the hon. the Minister for Development be pleased to state—

(1) what was the stock of soda ash with the Kerala soap institute on 31st March 1920, 31st March 1921 and 31st March 1922;

(2) when and at what rate it was purchased;

(3) what was the total quantity then purchased;

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(4) what is the quantity now in stock;
(5) what is its present rate;
(6) what is the value of the soda ash now in stock; and
(7) what are the Government going to do with it?

A.—(1) 173 tons.

(2) The details are furnished below:—

When purchased.	Quantity. Tons.	Cwt.	Lb.	Cost. RS.	A.	P.
In stock in 1917 ..	4	15	84	662	10	10
Purchased in 1917 in Tanur	30	0	0	5,442	2	0
Purchased in 1918 in Calicut	15	0	0	2,764	5	6
Purchased in 1918 in Calicut	75	0	0	14,612	9	3
Purchased in 1918 in Calicut	83	4	1	16,483	6	3

(3) 207 tons.
(4) 167 tons.
(5) Rupees 185 ex godown Madras in cwt. bags.
(6) The book value is Rs. 30,898–5–10.
(7) The soda ash is being sold as opportunities offer.

Repeal of the Madras Planters' Labour Act.

527 *Q.*—Mr. A. D. M. Bavotti Sahib: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) what is the total number of coolies and maistris who have been sentenced to imprisonment under the Madras Planters' Labour Act from the first year of its operation to the last year;

(*b*) what is the approximate cost to the Government of maintaining these prisoners in jail during the said period;

(*c*) what are the chief offences for which these men were sent to jail;

(*d*) whether it is the intention of the Government to repeal the said Act in the near future;

(*e*) whether the Government consulted the United Planters' Association or other planters on the question of repealing the Act or amending it; and

(*f*) if so, when was it and what was the reply received?

A.—(*a*) & (*c*) The hon. Member is referred to the annual reports on the working of the Act which have been placed on the Editors' Table.

(*b*) There is no separate account to show the cost on these prisoners only.

(*d*) The matter is under consideration.

(*e*) Yes.

(*f*) During the years 1920 and 1921.

The Government are unable at present to publish the papers.